

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants would like to express his appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided on August 20, 2004, and for the acknowledgment of Application's Claim of Priority and receipt of the Certified Copy of the priority document in the Official Action.

Applicants also express appreciation to the Examiner for acknowledgment of the Information Disclosure Statement filed in the present application on May 24, 2002, and for the indication that the Information Disclosure Statement was considered.

Further, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that claims 7 and 8 contain allowable subject matter on page 4 of the Official Action.

On page 2 of the Official Action, claims 1 and 5-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C 102(b) as being anticipated by HIYAMA (US 5,124,789) of record. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In the Official Action, the Examiner takes a position that an organ-region-image database of the present invention is shown as Hard Disk 731 in Fig.3 of HIYAMA. Applicants respectfully submit that, while Hard Disk 731 likely would include some

kind of data, neither the "reference data" nor the "image data" recited in claim 1 is disclosed or suggested in HIYAMA.

Further, the Examiner takes a position that a still image capturing system of the present invention is the same as Optical Recorder For Still Image 723 of HIYAMA. Applicants respectfully submit that one feature of Applicants' claimed still image capturing system is to retrieve a frame of still image data as referential image data, which feature is also not described or suggested in HIYAMA. While there are two paragraphs regarding Optical Recorder For Still Image 723 in HIYAMA (see column 2 lines 30-34 and a paragraph bridging column 2 and 3), neither discloses the above feature.

Further, the Examiner takes a position that a searching system and a reference display control system of the present invention are disclosed in column 3, lines 7 to 29 of HIYAMA. While the lines indicated by the Examiner disclose several procedures with respect to sending an image and a signal to image input device 703 or image filling apparatus 704, these procedures do not utilize reference image data produced by the still image capturing system. Additionally, there is no description with respect to the image data that coincide with the reference image data as recited in claim 1.

Additionally, Applicants note that claim 1 recites, inter alia, "an organ-region-image data base" which stores "reference data" and "image data", a "still-image-capturing system that retrieves a frame of still image data as referential image data",

and a “searching system that searches said organ-region-image data base for image data which coincides with said referential image data after the retrieval of the frame of still image data from said video signal by said still-image-capturing system”. Thus, it is clear that claim 1 requires that the data base be searched for image data that coincides with the referential image data, i.e., that the image data and the referential image data be compared. However, column 3, lines 7-29, of HIYAMA, which were noted by the Examiner, fails to disclose or suggest the above noted comparing of image data and referential image data.

Accordingly, for all the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that HIYAMA fails to disclose each and every element recited in claim 1 and that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 USC § 102(b) is improper. Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of claim 1 under 35 USC § 102(b) and provide an early indication of the allowance thereof.

Applicants also submit that dependent claims 2-6 and 9, which are patentable due to their respective dependencies from claim 1 at least for the reasons noted above, recite additional features of the present invention and are also separately patentable over the prior art of record.

COMMENTS ON REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

In regard to the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 7 and 8 on pages 4 of the Official Action, Applicants do not disagree with the Examiner's indication that the noted features of these claims are neither shown nor suggested by the prior art of record. However, Applicants wish to make clear that the each of the claims in the present application recites a combination of features, and that the patentability of these claims is also based on the totality of the features recited therein, which define over the prior art. Thus the reasons for allowance should not be limited to those mentioned by the Examiner.

As mentioned above, the rejections and objection of claims 1-9 are no longer proper, therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and objection, and early indication of the allowance of these claims.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, or rendered moot. The Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this response, or the present application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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